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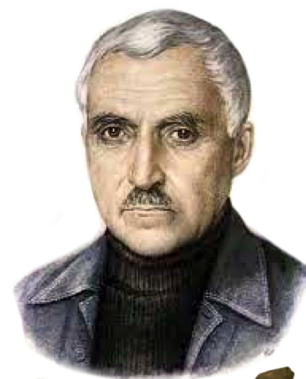
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NEVER BEFORE

№ 30



Приложение к газете
«ВОРОНЕЖСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»



The 30th jubilee issue of “Never Before” is devoted to the coming great holiday — the 70th anniversary of our Victory in the Great Patriotic War and presents the works of prize winners of two contests held on the eve of this holiday.

The first one was that of translation of the poem “Wait for me” by Konstantin Simonov. It was conducted by the English Chair for Science Departments together with “Never Before” and was devoted both to the Victory anniversary and the poet’s centenary. The contest was intended for University students, however among its participants were also schoolchildren and a school teacher of English.

The other was the contest of compositions in English «The Great Patriotic War in My Family». It was held by Voronezh Association of Teachers of English among both students and schoolchildren.

We hope that our readers will enjoy reading the creative works of the prize winners.

Меди медя и я вернусь к
обсем смертям нашим.
Кто нв. не дал медя, тот пусть
Скандет! победю!
Не понять не издавши, ни
Как среди огня
Опсиданет своим
Мне спасла медя.
Как я выжил - будет знать
Только мы с тобой -
Просто ты у меня ждешь
Как никто другой!

К. Симонов

19¹³/_х 41

Мурманск

Translations of K. Simonov's poem "Wait for Me"

Wait for me, I will come back.
Don't give in to pain.
Wait, when everything goes black
Under heavy rain.

Wait, when snow freezes heart,
Hides the world in haze.
Wait for me, we're not apart
Till the end of days.

Wait, when nothing gives you hope,
Nothing strengthens faith.
Wait, when at the end of rope
You feel weak like wraith.

Wait for me, I'll find the way
To come back to you.
Wait, forget what others say.
I will make it through.

Even when my blood, my son
Lets me go for good,
Even when my friends are done,
Wait for me, you should!

Do not stop or lose belief!
Argue! Disagree!
Don't surrender to your grief!
Don't give up on me!

Wait for me, I WILL come back!
I will break through hell!
I'll hold out! I'll attack!
I will strike, rebel!

No force can conquer me,
It's not luck or fate...
I'll come home safe and free
Just because you wait.

They will wonder with relief,
How I stayed alive.
I'll come back, 'cause your belief
Helped me to survive.

Wait for me until I'm back
Even if it's hard.
Wait in spite of all impacts
And protect your hoping heart.

Wait for me when blizzard blows,
Wait when it is scorching heat.
Fight with hopelessness sharp claws.
You must cope with it.

Wait, when letters will not come
From the farthest land.
Wait, when other's hope has gone
Like through the sieve goes sand.

Wait for me till I return
Even if they say
That it's time for hope to burn.
Blow these thoughts away.

Let my son and let my mother
Accept my fameless death.
Let my friends and all the other
Have their humble rest.

They will drink some bitter wine
For my sinner's soul.
But for you it's not a sign
To give up at all.

Wait for me until I'm back.
And spit right in the death's mug.
Let other guys, whose hope got crack
Think my survival is luck.

They will never understand
How you made me braver.
And you know, I'm still not dead
Because of you - my savior.

I'm alive and it's a wonder.
I have won in battle with the death
Because you've been waiting harder
Harder than anybody else.

Wait for me and I'll return
But please wait for me.
Wait when comes an autumn term
and it rains sadly.
Wait when comes a winter term
Or when summer comes.
Wait when all the rest has lost
Hope for returns.
Wait when there are no more
Letters which could come.
Wait when expectation bores
You and everyone.

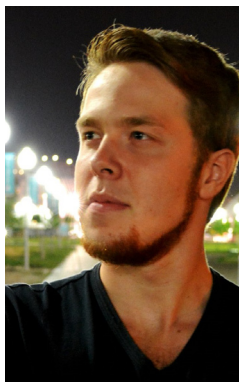
Wait for me and I'll return.
I could be in cell.
It's the fact they rely on,
Do not wish them well.
Let the mother and the son
Be sure of my death.
Let the friends drink bitter wine,
Let them feel that waste.
They could light a fire and
Make my funeral.
Don't drink with them, just wait.
Wait, my beautiful.

Wait for me and I'll return
In spite of death and fate.
They say: you are a lucky one;
They, who do not wait.
They will never understand
How you saved me:
I just knew on burning land
That you waited me.
How I survived would know
Only I and you.
That's because you can wait more
Than any else can do.



*Anna Skobaneva
Department
of Applied
Mathematics,
Informatics
and Mechanics
4th year student*

**FIRST
PLACE**



*Oleg Kondrakhin
Department
of Applied
Mathematics,
Informatics
and Mechanics
2nd year student*

**SECOND
PLACE**



*Elena Em
Department
of Applied
Mathematics,
Informatics
and Mechanics
2nd year student*

**THIRD
PLACE**

Wait for me and I will come.
 If your faith is strong,
 When the yellow rain falls down
 With sadnesses along,
 When the snow is sweeping up,
 When the streets are hot,
 When the others tomb my chance
 You forget me not.
 Wait for me without news
 From far and far away,
 When the promises are loose
 And all forgot my name.

Wait for me and I will come,
 You shouldn't lose your faith,
 Despite the friends, who all believe,
 I have met my death.
 Let the mother and the son
 Believe that I am dead,
 Let the peers, for a while
 Be a little sad,
 Let them drink some bitter wine
 For the peace of mine...
 Wait for me and I'll return,
 If you really want.

Wait for me and I will come,
 All the deaths despite.
 And let the people, who gave up,
 To be in their right.
 They could never really get,
 How among the fire,
 With your endless, anxious wait
 You helped me stay alive.
 It could be our own secret,
 Of which we know-You and I-
 But the answer is so simple-
 Your faith helped me survive.



*Ekaterina Buksha
 International
 Relations Department
 2nd year student*

**THIRD
 PLACE**

*The poem by Konstantin Simonov
 turned out to be so inspiring that
 even one of the jury members
 professor Anatoly Babushkin
 decided to translate it:*

**Wait for me and I'll return from
 the War alive**

Wait for me, You always should
 Wait and wait again.
 Wait is spite of gloomy mood
 Caused by drizzling rain.
 Wait in spite of snow-fall,
 Wait in spite of heat,
 Even when the chance is small —
 People say — to meet.
 Wait when no letters come,
 Wait at any rate.
 Be for those deaf and dumb
 Who is sick to wait.

Wait for me and I'll return.
 During any chat
 Turn away from other men
 Who believe me dead.
 Let my children and my Mam
 See me in the grave.
 You are not to think like them,
 Make Your waiting brave.
 At the fire-place my mate
 Drinks a mournful wine.
 You just wait, and don't drink
 With a friend of mine.

Wait for me, and I'll come soon,
 Keep your patience, wait.
 It was not «a silver spoon»
 That controlled my fate,
 Is it easy to believe?
 Let me give a cue:
 I was granted luck to live
 Just because of You.
 All my ordeals were great,
 I was hurt and stung.
 But You had the art to wait,
 You — the only one!



*Anatoly Babushkin
 Professor, Head
 of the English Chair
 for Humanities*

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

There is no family in Russia, I think, which could forget about that cruel war. It was long ago as it could seem. But my great-grandfather is alive. He's very-very old. But he remembers all about that cruel war and often tells me about it. It's very hard for him — that war took away his friends' lives and lives of members of his family. My great-grand father went through the whole war. And I want to tell about him.

His name is Anuphriev Georgyi Alexandrovich. He was born on the 12th of April in 1921. When the war started, he was only 20. He was so young! He was in army and he was a mechanic on the bomber aircrafts SU-2.

My great-grandpa often tells me about the war and I imagine terrible pictures of that life.

One of the pictures — I see the planes, these are the fascists' aircrafts — Messerschmitts — they are closer and closer... They're flying over the airfield... They are very noisy, they are roaring... No order to shoot... On the field there are warriors, they are lying on the ground, covering their heads by hands... The aircrafts are flying away... Silence... And I feel my heart, it is knocking furiously.

The second picture — a young woman. She's 24. She's short and slim. She's got short wavy hair. She looks like a boy. She's nice and merry. She's laughing. Her name's Kate. Kate Zelenko. She's the only woman ever known to have performed an aerial ramming. (My great-grandpa and Yekaterina Ivanovna were in the same 135th motorized infantry regiment.) It's the beginning of the war... I imagine the lieutenant — he is very excited... His voice is very loud... He is telling about 7 Messerschmitts — and Kate has shouted him: "Jump!!!" ...She has been married for three months...

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Her birthday would be the day after tomorrow....He died in September, 1941....

The next picture — I imagine — my great-grandpa's regiment is near Voronezh. He could go to the dismissal. He has got only three days. He's going on a passing car, he's walking, he wants to see his mum. He finds only Russian oven surviving from the bombing... (Later he learnt that his mum was alive). He has to come back to his regiment. He's walking through the field and he suddenly discovers that he's going through the field which is full of mines! And my heart is knocking...I feel his horror...And my knees are shaking... And what a wonder! He has walked through this field!

And I imagine again...My great-grandfather is in Europe. They are in the liberated concentration camp. This camp is empty. There are a lot of clothes and shoes... But there are no people...They have found a lot of soap bars. They are happy — soap is a very rare thing ... They are starting to take these soap bars, but suddenly they hear a scream: "Fellows! These are from people!"And my eyes are welling over with tears....I hate fascism!

When I was little, we often walked to the monument of Glory on the 9th of May. I walked on the monument and he held my hand. I was very-very proud to go with him. There were a lot of people, they were looking at us. He wore medals. There were so many honors that I couldn't count them all! They were glistening in the sun.

Now, I'm looking at him. I'm 12 and he's 93. He is very old. He will be 94 in April. I want him to be 94 very much! He can't go out. He walks in his flat from window to window. And he is thinking of the war. He remembers the war. And I remember it too.

Thank you for your courage!

Thank you for my future!

Thank you for our peace!

Alyona Chudakova
6th form, school № 93
Prize winner among
schoolchildren

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

The Great Patriotic War was over seventy years ago, but it is a kind of war which has no time limitation neither in the history of Russia nor in the soul of Russian people. Its echo is still in our hearts.

Some years ago on the eve of the Victory Day we had a lesson devoted to this great event where my classmates told about their great-grandparents who defended selflessly the honor of our country. This lesson encouraged me to find out more about my relatives taking part in the World War II.

When I came home after classes I asked my mother to tell me about my relatives who took part in the War. My mother took an old album and showed me a photo. I could see a young man wearing a military uniform. The first thing I noticed were his wonderfully intelligent and kind eyes. It was the photo of my great-grandmother's brother, Ivan Andreevich Lukyanov. He fell on the battlefield in 1943.

Then my mother began her story about her grandmother's family. I could hardly breathe listening to her carefully and trying to keep in my mind every word she said.

My mother's grandmother grew up in a large and united family. She had three brothers: Ivan, Vasily, and Egor. They spent their childhood in the village of Komarevtsevo in the Belgorod region. When the war broke out the three brothers joined the army and went to the front line to defend our Motherland. During the ruthless war the brothers had to go through countless trials, sufferings and hardships. Two of the brothers were lucky to survive and return home, but the eldest brother, Ivan, was killed in battle.

How did it happen? Did he perform a great deed? Was my relative a hero? Did he have an award? I asked my mother a lot of questions, but, unfortunately, there was nothing more she could tell me about Ivan. I was in despair.

My family decided to make a request to the military archive in Podolsk.

Soon we got a reply to our letter. It said that on the 8th of January 1943 Ivan Andreevich Lukyanov was awarded the Order of the Red Star for heroism, dedication and courage demonstrated on the battlefield.

We were really happy to learn about it and carried on our investigation. Our aim was to find the place where the battle took place. Surfing the Internet, in the end we came across the necessary information. In the book of condolence written by Peter Chaliy, a writer and a journalist, we read about the battle for height 205.6, where more than 700 soldiers and officers gave their lives. Ivan Lukyanov was among them.

Curiously enough, this battle took place in the Voronezh region, where my sister and I were born.

We managed to find this writer and tell him the words of our sincere gratitude for his work. It took him more than 10 years to collect thoroughly the information about the heroic deeds of our fellow countrymen. Creating his book of condolence, he has done all his best to preserve the memory of the heroes of the Great Patriotic War for the generations to come.

Every year all members of my family go to the eternal flame to lay flowers there and venerate the memory of those who sacrificed their lives for the future and freedom of new generations.

There is hardly a family in our country which has not had a member participating in the war and my family is not an exception. I am strongly convinced that time will pass but Russian people will still remember the greatness of spirit and patriotism of our nation during those terrible years of war. Thanks to my family I am aware of what it means to keep memory of your ancestors. I am proud of my great-grandfather and feel true appreciation and gratitude for what he did for us. I am happy that I have something special to tell about the Great Patriotic War to my children when I grow up.

Anna Gavrish
10th form, gymnasium #2
Prize winner among schoolchildren

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

War is the worst thing that could come up with people. According to L.N. Tolstoy it is "unnatural human condition" ("War and Peace" by L.N. Tolstoy). For our country the Great Patriotic War is not an exception. It is one of the most bloody and brutal wars.

On the eve of the 70th anniversary of the Victory new facts emerge increasingly, increasingly we appeal to veterans, we honour their heroism with great trepidation and treat them with great respect.

The Great Patriotic War touched almost every family. Someone lost a father, someone lost a brother, someone lost a son. War is not only a battle on the front lines. Even every day in the rear is a military exploit. The fight against hunger, the teenagers' labour at factories, in the fields — all these approach the victory. These people are heroes too, those who waited, believed and hoped.

I would like to tell the story of the most ordinary family, the most common heroes.

My grandmother, Sturova Raisa Ivanovna, is 72 years old. She was born in 1941. She remembers the war by terrible losses she had. She remembers how they picked up rot-

ten potatoes in the fields, nettles and quinoa, how she exchanged clothes for food. Nowadays my grandmother eats bread and collects every tiny bit. She often recalls her war and post-war childhood full of losses and tears.

Her father died during the war leaving his wife with two children. The only thing that is left after him is this letter:

"30 July, 1942

Fly, fly, letter, don't sink in the water, don't be lost in the wind. Tell my children and all the relatives that today I am alive.

Even if I die, my wife, the most important is that all children grow up

out to play only when you have done all your homework. Maybe, if I don't die, I'll send you to study at the institute.

Well, mum, Lisa, and children, I don't know whether I come back home alive or not. If only God would help... Pray for me, maybe we'll meet again.

With love, your son, husband and dad"

Each letter from that war is a piece of somebody's life, soul. Personal letters show how tragic the war was, how hard the time was. The war messed up all peoples' plans.

P.S

This letter inspired me to draw these sketches of my great-grandmother, grandmother and their children. If these days we remember all those who died during the Great Patriotic war it means that no one is forgotten and nothing is forgotten.

*Pavel Tolstikov
8th form, school № 44
Prize winner
among schoolchildren*



safe and sound. Make the kids listen to their grandmother. Especially in the summer look after little children: keep away from matches, the well, a deep pond. Do not let them take anything strange. Awful things can happen, if you don't take care of children.

My dear children, love and take care of your grandmother, don't say bad words to her. She stayed with you like your grandfather and your father. How do I want to go into the field, to pick up the most beautiful flowers. How do I want, children, to see you, to hug and to kiss.

Vanka, my son, I write it just for you. I wish you grow up a healthy and good person. Love you and Raisa, I send you greetings. Dear children, in addition to the greeting I can't send you anything else. Come

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

*Oh, that Day of Victory!
Cordite in the air.
Day so youthful,
Silver threads in golden hair
Day of beauty,
Tears of joy gleam everywhere
Day of Victory!*

«Victory Day» is one of the most favourite songs of my granddad. When he listens to war songs, there are tears in his eyes. My grandfather

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wasn't a soldier during the Great Patriotic War because he was too young. He was a child of that fierce war. He sometimes shares his war memories with my mum and me.

My granddad's name is Boris Astafievich Tkachyov. He was born in a beautiful village Dolgoe not far from Voronezh. He was four when the war began. On the 3rd of July, 1941 Stalin addressed the nation by radio. In response to his appeal my granddad's father went to a recruiting centre and was sent to the front. My great-grandmother was left with three children.

One day when my grandfather was working in the field he saw some lorries with German soldiers arriving at their village. My grandpa's house was in the centre of their village. It was nice and big. That's why fascists turned my great-grandmother with her children out of the house and set up their headquarters there. The Nazis didn't allow my relatives to take any clothes or food. The children began to cry, but the fascists only laughed at them. An old woman from another street let my great-grandmother live in her small house.

At the edge of the village the Germans built a concentration camp for Soviet war prisoners. Women and children from Dolgoe went there to feed the prisoners. They gave them bread and some vegetables. My grandfather can't forget hungry, miserable faces of those Soviet soldiers. After the war an obelisk was erected there.

I am proud of my great-grandfather Astafiy Stefanovich Tkachyov who was wounded but went as far as Berlin. He received many awards at the front for his courage. He came back home in August, 1945. It was the happiest day for his family. In our family album there are some old photos of two my granddad's uncles who went to the front too. They were brave and selfless. One of them, my great-grandmother's brother was heavily wounded liberating Prague. His last letter has been kept in our family for many years. He wrote it just before that deadly battle.



*My great-grandfather
is on the right*

It was an exceptionally cruel war. Over 27 million Soviet people lost their lives. The road to victory was hard. That's why the Victory Day is a special day for all people of our country. On this day we like watching traditional military parade on Red Square on TV. Then my relatives visit the war memorial on Zadonsky highway. At home we sing war songs and one of them is «Katyusha». My great-grandfather and his military comrades liked it very much.

Apple-trees and pear-trees

were a-blooming,

*Mists were floating on the river, deep,
And Katyusha's gone out in the gloaming
On the river bank so high and deep.*

70 years have passed since that victory. This year there will be a parade in Voronezh on the 9th of May. My family is going to take part in the march of the Immortal Regiment, carrying the photos of our relatives. We have no right to forget the people who gave their lives for the freedom of our Motherland.

*Sophia Tkachyova
10th form, school № 35
Prize winner among
schoolchildren*

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

**Pages from
my great-grandfather's diary**

July, 1941

I'm Safonov Alexander Zaharovich. I hope that one day you'll read my diary. I live in the village Hrenovoe of Voronezh region. I'm 16. The war began, but I was not taken to the army because of the age. This year I am finishing the ninth form and entering Voronezh military college of communication.

September, 1941

There appeared the first signs of war: ruins, fires, common graves. I left Voronezh. Now our college is in Samarkand. Soon we'll be real soldiers and we'll be sent to the 75th sea brigade. We'll arise as one man in defense of our Motherland.

December, 1941

Such a cold winter night... A year of suffering is coming. The 75th sea brigade is transferred to defend Moscow. In winter frost and blizzard nights I take part in ski raids to enemy's rearward. Yesterday in one of such raids I was wounded.

February, 1942

I'm in hospital. Nothing serious, only a light wound, soon I'll be back to the front. I hope I'll go to Stalingrad. I'll be a telephonist of the 27th Guards Rifle Division.

August, 1942 — November, 1943

It's about 4 a.m. and now it's quiet here, but fights and bombardments can begin any second. Every day and night we establish telephone connection under enemy's fire.

November 19, 1942 —

February 2, 1943

The fighting has been lasting for many months. We sustain huge losses. In this war we fight heroically, till the last breath, till the last drop of blood. We have surrounded and defeated the Stalingrad fascist unit.

August 1, 1944

We try to do everything possible and impossible for the victory. I'll never forget the time when we forced the Vistula river, not far from Warsaw. Our life gradually turned into hell. One day when we reached the middle of the river enemy's machine guns hit, artillery opened fire, water fountains rose highly. Icy water chilled me to the bones. Looking around I saw a reel of wire, I quickly grabbed it and swam to the enemy's shore, where the battle was. I established contact with our division commander observation point. For courage and bravery I was awarded with the order of fame.

January 14, 1945

Our division fights for cities Lods, Kutno, Poznan. The battles are fought for each house. In one of the houses the wounded are placed. The Nazis try to seize the building. They begin firing, the connection is lost. I order the soldier to reconnect and I provide the defense of the building. Fortunately, the connection is quickly restored and I report to the general about the Nazi's attack. Reinforcements come and we win the battle.

February 21, 1945

I can't stop thinking about this war. This war is really the worst thing that can happen. It brings such a dangerous pain to our hearts. This year the war comes to the end for me. I am sent to study. I believe in the best. Thanks to our soldiers fascism will be defeated.

Dmitriy Safonov

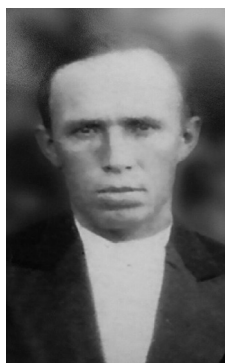
8th form, school № 45

Prize winner among schoolchildren

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

The 70th anniversary of the Great Victory over Nazi Germany in the Great Patriotic War is a special day. It's a wonderful holiday different from all other holidays. It is a national holiday and at the same time a very personal one because that terrible

war touched the lives of every family in every street in every town in our country. In my ancestry there are also some episodes related to the Great Patriotic War. I know about them from the memoirs of my grandma Ekaterina Filippovna.



When the Great Patriotic War started my great grandfather, Kogtev Filipp Filippovich was mobilized to the Army. He was a driver and transported projectiles to the front line. Fortunately, he wasn't wounded during the war and even reached Berlin. We are proud of him, of his courage and bravery. My great-grandfather had many battle rewards. They are our family's relic now.

Not long ago I asked my grandma to tell me some new facts or stories about the war and was greatly impressed by the one how she managed to stay alive during the war. This is the story she told me:

«My mother, Kogteva Maria Egorovna lived in Repyovskij region. When the Nazis came to Voronezh land and occupied the village where she lived, they started to impose their new orders and destroy everything around. One day they made my mother cook hens for them. At that time people in the village used cast-iron pots both for cooking meal and for dying clothes. When my mother started to cook hens in those cast-iron pots, the hens in one of them turned blue because she had dyed the fabric for children's clothing in it. The Nazis saw the blue hens and got very angry with her. They were

sure she wanted to poison them. They took their guns, ordered my mum to take the pot with the blue hens to the refuse-pit and throw them out. She tried to explain to the Nazis that the hens weren't spoiled but only dyed. But they didn't want to listen to anything and led the family to shooting. My mother was followed by her 5 children, 1 to 10 years old. I was among them, too.

In order to persuade the Nazis that the hens were edible, my mother started to distribute those hens among her children, the whole family ate the hens and everyone was fine. The Nazis realised that the hens weren't spoiled and took the guns away. Then they caught three new hens and made my mother cook them again but in clean pots".

My great grandmother stayed alive thanks to her resourcefulness. She lived to 102.

I was greatly impressed by this story and it made me think about a lot of things. Suddenly I realized that I should take care of my family, should cherish them and be thankful to them for my life and for everything I have. Moreover, our great grandfathers and great grandmothers pass away and the History goes away together with them. It depends on us not to let it go forever.

Lyuba Kogteva

9th form, school 81

Prize winner among schoolchildren



The whole family



"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"



*Remember all names
With all our hearts
It need not dead
It needs alive.
(R. Rozhdestvenskiy)*

I want and must tell you the story life of my great-grandmother Anna Spiridonovna Garshina who had gone through difficult times — times of starvation, fears, pain and loss — the period of the most titanic battle in the history of humanity — the Great Patriotic War.

She was 15 years old when the war began. She was born on 18th February 1926 in village Zagaidarovka, situated in Lugansk region, but in 1933 her family left for Voronezh.

When she was a child, Anna dreamed of becoming a doctor and saving people's lives. However she never became a doctor, but nevertheless, she gave life — to my grandmother,



to my mother and me. She had gone through the terrific war as a soldier and bravely fought for our future peaceful and happy life. She was and is a hero in my family and we will always remember her.

On 22nd June 1941 all the radio stations of the USSR broadcasted the official announcement about the attack of fascist Germany against our country. A lot of people were eager to defend their Motherland. Anna and her schoolmates went to the front as volunteers. They believed it was a debt of honour — to be useful for their homeland, even if the price would be very high — their own lives. People lived with the motto «Everything for the Front — Everything for the Victory! ».



My great-grandmother Anna Garshina with her companions in arms, 1943

Anna was taken to the 5th mobile artillery repair workshop. Their aim was to pick up and repair military equipment even under the bullets. Their activity was very important for the Soviet Army during the War. The time was horrible, but nothing could break the firmness of the Soviet people.

At the age of 17, Anna was seriously contused and had to leave the battlefield. For the whole year she could not speak and everyone thought that she would not speak at all. Only after a year being at home, Anna pronounced her first word — «Mom». It was so unexpectedly that her mother spilled a cup of hot water. That word was very dear and hopeful for her relatives. The short word included the Family, the Motherland and the whole World that now were free and peaceful.



Soldiers and pilots, generals and admirals, doctors and nurses - the heroes of the Great Patriotic War — dreamed of peace, and that the war would be the last. We all know and should remember their heroic feats. The victory

in the Great Patriotic War was achieved thanks to the heroism of our people and my great-granny as well.

My great-granny's participation in that war is small and at the same time very great, because the fight and work of every person resulted in the notable Victory of the Soviet people. She was awarded orders and medals for her heroic work and was proud of them.

Unfortunately, a human life is not eternal. My great-grandmother died in 2006, but she lives and will live in the memory of the members of our family. We will always remember and be proud of her and other heroes of the Great Patriotic War.

Eternal Glory to the Victors!

*Julia Khripunova
Voronezh State University of Architecture
and Civil Engineering
Prize winner among students*

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"



*By birth I am not from childhood.
I am from war.*

Yuliya Drunina

December 31st — New Year's Eve. Everybody was enjoying the holiday, decorating New Year trees and buying presents. But for me it was not a funny day. 40 days ago the dearest and the most important member of my family, my Great-grandpa died. Now his place at the dinner table is empty, but he will be forever in my heart.

For me my Great-grandfather Aleksey Tihonovich Dekhanov, is an ideal person with features which I would like to have. He lived a long and happy life, but he was never depressed, although sometimes his life was very severe.

At the age of 18 he joined the army as a soldier. From the first days of the Great Patriotic War he struggled courageously against the enemy.

Any war is sorrow and tears, fear and pain, suffering and destruction. When I was a small girl my great-grandpa told me stories about the war, his comrades and my heart was beating stronger; I felt the pain of those millions of people, soldiers who had

was among them, proud that he contributed to the Great Victory of our people. My Great-grandpa was a sapper. During the Great Patriotic War he undermined the enemy buildings and structures. He was rewarded some orders for courage and bravery.

After the war, he met his first and the only love, my great-granny, his wife. They had lived together for 60 years, and he did not forget about her not for a second. When I was a child, I liked to stay with him. I will never forget the great number of books, which he had read to me, chocolates, which he always had in his pocket for me. He liked to meet with pupils and students telling them about the Great War and his brother-soldiers, after those meetings I often saw tears in his eyes. I do not know any other person who liked the life so much as my Great-grandpa did.

Despite his hard life he was always cheerful and was fond of jokes. His birthday was on the 9th of May on the great holiday — Victory day. But on that holiday he was always sad and thoughtful.

GLORY TO ALL OUR DEFENDERS!

I would really like to be with my Great-grandpa on the 70th anniversary of the Great victory, but...

My dear Great-grandpa, you are in our hearts not only on the Victory Day, but for all our life.

We will and must remember the military feat and glory of our Great-grandfathers, who gave their lives, health, and youth for our bright and peaceful future.



My great-grandparents Aleksey and Maria Dekhanov, 1991

fought for their Motherland, their families, children, for peace and future.

I am proud that my great-grandfather

"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

World War II was one of the most horrible events for many peoples. I guess, every family from the then USSR has much to tell about hardships and miseries of that time. As for me, I'll tell you what I heard about the war from my Grandmother Ann. She told me how frightened they were during the war, how they strived to survive, how they learnt to wait and to hope. I'll try my best to relate two unforgettable pieces from my family chronicles.

I

My great-grandfather Fyodor was born in Prokhorovka (Belgorod region). By the beginning of WW II he had successfully finished his conscription with the Red Army in the Far East, married, and had two children, one of which was my Grandma Ann.

When the World War II broke out he and his two brothers had to leave their families and go to the front. Their mother took a very old family icon, knelt and prayed for a long time, and blessed her sons with the icon. When they were ready to leave, she told them, "Remember, you will all be back home."

Be it coincidence or not, but her words came true, and the three of them returned home alive: one of them was wounded in the Stalingrad Battle, and went home after a long hospital treatment, the other two participated in battles in Europe, and returned by the end of the war.

II

As for my great-grandfather Fyodor, he was fighting fascists in Ukraine. However, Fyodor's wife got an official letter about her husband having been killed in battle for the West Ukraine. It's difficult for me to understand today what she was feeling at the moment she read the message, but for some reason she didn't believe it, and just knew that there was some mistake and her husband would be back home. People said that there were many like her, poor souls, those who didn't believe when they received killed in action or missing certificates, as they were not able to agree with such heartbreaking news, and so went out of their minds a little bit. However, Fyodor's wife took no notice of whispers

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behind her back, because she felt she had to wait for Fyodor, and it would help.

The year of 1946 came, and the World War was over long ago, and all the family was involved in everyday routine, when one foggy autumn morning the garden gate opened, and Fyodor entered. His wife didn't believe her eyes first, and then rushed to kiss and clasp her husband in her arms. I'd like to explain what the family felt, how they looked at the hero, and how they cried all together, and what they spoke about, but I'm afraid, it's impossible to find adequate language to put all this in words.

* * *

Then my great-grandfather Fyodor worked at the railway road. He died when he was only 54. The hardships and war deprived him of many years of happiness and wellness. Nowadays it's impossible to estimate, what he failed to do in his life because of war. However, I am certain, that we, his family, will always remember the feat he managed to accomplish for us — he managed to fight courageously, defend his Motherland, and return back alive.

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"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

This year I lost my great-grandmother. She was not a war veteran, she was a "child of war", but they weren't children, they were grey-haired 12-years-olds. When I heard about this competition, I started to think what to say about and I've understood the problems of the young generation. Looking back at the past I remember how I listened to her and my attitude to all her "war" stories. This is non-involvement, ignorance or selfishness. We don't want to notice anything or anyone but ourselves. There are us and our problems only. Parents, the motherland, honor and dignity don't matter. Pleasure rules nowadays. But there will be a critical moment when everybody will get who we are, who our ancestors were and what they have done for us.

I came into the room; she was sitting at the table and looking at some photos.

- Hello, granddaughter. Come here, I want to say something.

- Again, I thought, I'll have to listen to her stories about my relatives, their grandchildren and their news...

Pulling a fixed smile I sat down and looked at the photo. It was one of those typical old yellow shabby pictures. There were some usual, not remarkable people. There was a husband with his wife and two children.

- This is my family. Father, mother and brother Alyosha.

- You never told about them. (But was I ever really interested?)

- We lived at the common collective farm on the border with Belarus. My fa-

ther was the chairman. When the Germans attacked, we went into the woods, where the father became the head of a partisan detachment. My mother, little brother and I helped them: we put up flyers and did some other small things as well. One day, we were given the task



Alexandra Rashevskaya

to blow up a bridge, and I went with my father. My mother and Alyosha stayed at the camp. Everything went according to the plan. The bridge was exploded, but we were captured while escaping. Those were horrible days of my life. Maybe a week later the mother was seized, and then some time later — Alyosha. Everyone knew that we were the chairman's family, so we were tortured more than anyone else. Every day dragged like hell. There was humiliation, shame, beating... There was silence, silence ... And time went even slower.

She paused for a moment and lowered her gaze. Then she went on with a faint smile.

- There was a boy, not much older than me/ and once he helped me to slip out. There were several of us and we escaped. I cried with happiness. But that was only the beginning of the disaster. I returned to the detachment of partisans, but a day later the news came. They would kill my family if I did not return. And I came back. Again, time was my enemy. Hope was lost. I did not believe in the victory, in the men, in soldiers. This went on for months until my personal judgment day. During one of the interrogations the father was able to break free and started a fight with the Germans, at this time I was pushed out of a window. When I was leaving, I turned around ... They killed him. They killed my brother. They simply stabbed him with a knife. They made my mother watch that. They pierced his little body in her eyes. Simple. Without effort. A single motion. There was my Alyoshenka. He was my price for freedom.

I swallowed, but a lump was still here, and stuck even more in my throat. My hands became wet, and I did not notice how the tears started to fall down on them.

— What happened then? - I asked in a trembling voice.

— My father was killed later, and my mother went crazy. I lost my family, but at the same time my entire Homeland became my family.

"No! We are your family! You got us a bit later but we are and we are here!" Thoughts frantically raced through my head, "I am here!" I grabbed her hand and looked into her eyes. I understood that I was wrong. A little girl Sanya saw her mother in every Russian woman, her father in every man and Alyoshenka in every little boy. Each person became her family. This woman has her mother's eyes, and that man has her father's laugh... The homeland is her family.

We sat for a while and had some tea. I said goodbye and went out into the street. The air was filled with lilacs. It was going to rain, as if the sky was about to mourn for the departed long ago. The sun was still trying to break through the dark clouds, sending us the rays of the May Victory.

— Happy Victory Day, Granny! Happy Victory Day, Homeland!

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"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

Since my early childhood I like to spend evenings looking through our old photo albums. From the yellow paper my grandparents look at me, strict and smiling.

Here is a card with a group of children in ties with badges. They are poorly dressed, but they look happy. This is my granny's class. This picture was made in Luga in 1939. Two years later the war would begin, Luga would be occupied by Germans and the Siege of Leningrad would start. Three of my granny's cousins would die from starvation.

And this is a shabby photo of three young men with Komsomol badges on their chests. It is my grandfather Kozelsky Aleksey Grigorievich with his friends. My great-grandmother hid this photo in the ground when their town was occupied by enemies. The fascists gathered all the youth and chased them to the station to send to Germany. Fortunately, my granddad managed to escape at night.

During the first year of the Great Patriotic War when he was 16, he and his father, my great-granddad, were helping the partisans. In 1942 war my grandfather added one year to his age to be able to join the army, as he was worried that he might miss his chance to fight for the motherland. He didn't miss this chance: he liberated Belarus, Warsaw, came to the German border where he was wounded. Granddad did want to fight again, so he escaped from the hospital and returned to the front, but his wound opened again and he had to meet the Victory Day in Potsdam's hospital.

In my childhood I used to examine with curiosity my grandfather's medals and orders. He had Polish and Soviet honors. My mother says that the most important for her dad were: the Order of the Red Star, the Order of the Patriotic War and the Polish Cross of Valor. In the yellowed premium sheet to the Polish award I read: "In the battle for the city Gombin 18.01.1945 junior lieutenant Kozelsky was the first to rush his platoon to the attack, burst into the trenches of the enemy, seized the German's machine gun, captured two officers and four soldiers, giving a chance to our infantry to move forward."

In our family archive there are also copies of triangle-letters of my granddad from

the front. That's how military weekdays were described in one of his letters: "My beloved parents! I'm writing to you from the trench in the accompaniment of exploding shells and whizzing bullets. We are holding the line and waiting for the offensive. The weather is nasty: rain, snow, frost and rain again, and fires are prohibited."

The originals of these letters are kept in the Museum of the Belarusian Village Lenino, where for the first time during the Great Patriotic War the Polish division named after Kostyushko joined the Soviet army in the battle against the invaders.



Aleksey Grigorievich Kozelsky
1945

My grandfather returned from the War at the age of 20. Nowadays it is difficult to imagine a young man with such kind of

experience. After the war my granddad became a teacher and worked at school for 30 years. My mother says his pupils loved him and were proud of their teacher who heroically participated in the Great Patriotic war.

One more photo shows my grandmother in 1947 in Voronezh: students and teachers are tidying up the city from the stones of destroyed buildings. Every day they worked hours and hours after classes. They were inspired by an idea of seeing their hometown rebuilt and clean as it had been before the war.

My grandparents died, but we remember them in our hearts. The Victory Day is not only a nationwide holiday for us. It is a family holiday when we visit our grandparents' graves, Voronezh War memorials, meet together with family friends in our uncle's house, where he usually cooks soldiers porridge to my grandfather's recipe. We look through our family archives, sing war songs and recollect those whom we owe our today lives.

I'm very proud of my Grandfather and Grandmother. They didn't relax on pension and worked till the end of their lives. They had difficult fates and they never separated their lives from the life of our country.

This year they might celebrate their 90th anniversaries... I never saw them, my dear grandparents. But looking at their strict and smiling faces in the photos, I always ask myself whether I will be lucky to meet and make friends with such people as my dearest grandparents, and if there is anything much more frightening than War, much stronger than Love and much more desirable than Peace.

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"The Great Patriotic War in My Family"

...Dasha was sitting on the sofa in her Granny's flat. As usual, she was watching the parade marching on the Red Square. "... this colour was erected over the Reichstag on the 30th of 1945 by private Egorov and junior sergeant Kantaria ..." solemnly went the announcer. Everything was just the same, but ... Dasha started weeping ... her Granny wasn't nearby anymore!.. Only now Dasha re-

alized the main thing: this was her first Victory Day without Granny!

Dasha couldn't watch the ceremony alone. She rose, switched off the TV and went to the Granny's room. She took out the box with Granny's war-time medals. There were some that she'd never seen before. "Possibly those of Grandpa's",

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she thought. Fingering them she noticed a tin box. There were some letters from Grandpa. Granny hardly ever spoke of Grandpa. The only thing Dasha knew was that he perished at war. The girl opened one of the letters. It read:

"Darling,

I'm sorry for not writing to you so long. The last battle completely destroyed our division. A few survivors (including me) were deployed to the 2nd Belorussian Front. Before we moved the battalion commander called upon me and Kolya. He said that mining engineers were needed, so we were sent to Eastern Prussia. On arrival I was appointed the commander of the Field Engineering Group. You know, Prussia reminded defenses. Here and there we saw ruins. I can't forget a small village we assaulted last week. There were inscriptions "Königsberg Does NOT CAPITULATE!" everywhere. The defenders were trying to hold the village by all means. I've never seen the Germans fighting so fiercely. Kolya once said that it was similar to Stalingrad but now the roles swapped. We had lost so many lads in that combat ... now we are advancing forward to Königsberg's suburbs. The commander said that the city was very well fortified so we wouldn't feel bored. Kolya thinks that when we have taken the city, Berlin will already be burning.

At the moment we are having rest."

Dasha put the letter aside. She didn't know that her Grandpa was fighting for native Stalingrad. She suddenly realized that she knew nothing. While thinking over this in silence she took the second letter. It went:

"My dearest, I am all right. Please, don't worry. Now I'm in hospital. Doctors say that I've had a slight shell-shock. I'm going to be well soon. In my last letter I wrote about Königsberg. Eventually we took the city. Never in my life have I seen such fighting. The city turned into unsailable fortress. The fascists were waiting for us in every house, in every street... everywhere! When advancing forward we faced the plunging artillery fire. We were crawling until we reached a house. It appeared that we got lost and cut off from the main forces. To join them, we needed to cross the street. I decided to run first, followed by our machine gun operator Pasha. Kolya was to be the last. I'll never forget his glance. He was hurt that I didn't choose him to be the first. But I didn't want to risk my best friend. As soon as I crossed the road, Pasha followed me. He hardly managed to make ten steps when the house shook with explosion. At the end of the street there was a tank. They spotted us crossing the road. I was wounded. The last thing I remember was Pasha carrying me on his back over the barricade. Despite casual-

ties our offensive attack was going on. I was given a new squad. I swore to take the city. I reckoned all my forces to revenge for my perished comrades. Before I got to Königsberg's bunkers I had lost still more men. I was eager to revenge. But then I saw captivated generals leaving the bunker. They looked miserable. Königsberg was burning. I realized that not only the city but all their world had collapsed. They were doomed. As I was looking at the ruins I imagined my Stalingrad, the Lenin Avenue. I was missing home, I wanted to come back. I think the Germans felt the same. However, it were they who brought the war in their homes.

My dearest Katya, I suddenly recalled your favourite embankment, I thought it was lost forever. Then I fainted. I came round in hospital.

I'm missing you, my love, waiting for your letters. I'll be back soon."

Dasha put the letters back. She searched for the third one. But the only thing she found was a short message. It said that Grandpa was dead.

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